

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **CHAPTER 13 RULES**

#### **RULE 13-1.           APPLICABILITY**

These Chapter 13 Rules relate to chapter 13 cases filed in all divisions of the Court, and supersede any previous orders in conflict with these provisions. To the extent that these Rules conflict with the provisions of the Massachusetts Local Bankruptcy Rules ("MLBR"), the provisions of these Rules shall prevail. In all other respects, the MLBR shall apply in all chapter 13 cases.

#### **RULE 13-2.           COMMENCEMENT OF CASE**

(a) In addition to the requirements of MLBR 1007-1, the debtor shall:

(1) file with the Court and submit to the chapter 13 trustee:

(A) with the petition:

- (i) evidence of current and sufficient liability and property insurance (not including insurance obtained by any secured party) with respect to any real property or vehicle in which the debtor has an interest; and
- (ii) an executed copy of the engagement agreement by and between the debtor and any attorney retained by the debtor in the form set forth on MLBR Official Local Form 8.

EXCEPT that if the debtor shall fail to file such documents with the petition, the Court shall issue an order notifying the debtor and the debtor's attorney that, if the missing documents are not filed within fourteen (14) days from the date of commencement of the case and the Court has not allowed a motion to extend the time for filing the missing documents, filed pursuant to subsection (b) below, the Court may dismiss the case pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 109(g) or § 1307 at the expiration of that period without a hearing.

(B) within three (3) days after the commencement of the case, a matrix of creditors, failing which the Court may dismiss the case pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 109(g) or § 1307 at the expiration of that period without a hearing.

(2) if the debtor is a debtor engaged in business, submit to the chapter 13 trustee:

(A) within seven (7) days after the commencement of the case:

- (i) evidence of current and sufficient business insurance; and
    - (ii) evidence that appropriate debtor-in-possession checking accounts were opened at the time of the filing of the petition;
  - (B) within fourteen (14) days after the commencement of the case, a profit and loss statement for the calendar year or fiscal year, whichever is applicable, preceding the year in which the case is filed, and a profit and loss statement for the period from the end of the calendar or fiscal year to the date of the filing of the petition; and
  - (C) within thirty (30) days of the close of each quarter, a statement of quarterly income and expenses incurred.
- (b) Any motion requesting an extension of time to file documents required under this Rule shall be filed before the expiration of the filing deadline, shall set forth the specific cause for the request, the amount of additional time requested and the date the petition was filed, and shall include a certificate of service evidencing that the motion was served on the chapter 13 trustee.
  - (c) Any motion to amend a voluntary petition or statement shall be served upon all parties affected by the amendment and the chapter 13 trustee. The motion and proposed amendment shall be accompanied by a certificate of service identifying those parties served. A motion to amend to add a creditor to the debtor's schedules shall be served upon the creditor being added and the chapter 13 trustee. An amendment adding a creditor or party in interest shall be accompanied by 1) the fee prescribed by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, if applicable, and 2) an amended matrix including the names and addresses of the added parties.

**RULE 13-3. DISCLOSURE OF RELATED CASES**

[Deleted] (Included in Rule 1007-1, incorporated by reference in Appendix 1, Rule 13-2(a)).

**RULE 13-4. CHAPTER 13 PLAN**

- (a) Form of Plan
 

A chapter 13 plan shall conform to MLBR Official Local Form 3, with such alterations as may be appropriate to suit the circumstances.
- (b) Service of Plan

Concurrently with the filing of the plan, the debtor or the debtor's attorney shall cause a copy of the plan to be served by first class mail upon the chapter 13 trustee, all creditors of the debtor, all attorneys who have filed appearances and requested service of all pleadings, and other parties in interest. The debtor or his attorney shall file with the plan a certificate of service.

- (c) If a debtor proposes payments to creditors over a period that exceeds three (3) years, the debtor shall set forth in the plan the reasons for such longer payment period.

#### **RULE 13-5. SERVICE OF MOTIONS**

All motions and requests for orders must be served on the chapter 13 trustee, the debtor, the debtor's attorney, persons who have filed appearances and requested service of all pleadings, and all creditors with the following exceptions:

- (a) a motion for relief from the automatic stay shall be served on the debtor, the debtor's attorney, and all persons with an interest in or lien on the subject collateral;
- (b) a chapter 13 trustee's motion to dismiss shall be served on the debtor and the debtor's attorney;
- (c) a debtor's motion to dismiss or notice of conversion to chapter 7 or 11 when there have been no prior conversions shall be served on the chapter 13 trustee;
- (d) objections to claims shall be served on the chapter 13 trustee, the claimant, and the claimant's attorney; and
- (e) objections to confirmation shall be served in accordance with paragraph 13-8.

#### **RULE 13-6. ATTORNEYS**

- (a) An attorney who represents a debtor at the time a chapter 13 case is commenced or when a case under another chapter of the Bankruptcy Code is converted to chapter 13 has a continuing duty to represent the debtor in all matters, including the § 341 meeting and court hearings, until the occurrence of the earliest of the following:
  - (1) dismissal of the case;
  - (2) closing of the case; or
  - (3) the entry of an order allowing the attorney to withdraw from further representation of the debtor.

- (b) If an attorney for a debtor is unable to contact the debtor in connection with any matter, the attorney shall file a statement informing the Court of this fact, which statement shall include the efforts the attorney has made to contact the debtor. The attorney shall serve a copy of the statement on the debtor at his or her last known address.
- (c) The chapter 13 trustee or a representative of the chapter 13 trustee shall be present at any hearing held in a chapter 13 case, unless excused for cause prior to the hearing.

#### **RULE 13-7. PROFESSIONAL FEES; PREPETITION RETAINERS**

- (a) Prepetition Retainers. The amount of any retainer received by debtor's counsel paid within one year before the filing of the petition in bankruptcy or agreed to be paid for services rendered or to be rendered in contemplation of or in connection with the bankruptcy case shall be included in the Statement of Attorney Compensation filed pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2016(b).
- (b) Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, if debtor's attorney's total compensation prior to entry of a confirmation order is \$3,500 or less, the disclosure of the compensation in the Rule 2016(b) Statement shall be sufficient notwithstanding compensation for post confirmation services in an amount not exceeding \$500, and the filing of an itemized application for compensation shall be excused, unless the Court orders otherwise.
- (c) Application for Additional Attorney's Fees up to \$10,000. An attorney who has incurred fees in excess of \$3,500 prior to entry of a confirmation order or in excess of \$500 afterward, but less than \$10,000 in the aggregate, may file an application for compensation in accordance with Official Local Form 17, unless the Court orders otherwise. Notwithstanding the foregoing, an attorney required to file an application for compensation may, prior to allowance of such application, take the first \$4,000 received as interim compensation, subject to further order of the Court with respect to such application.
- (d) Application for Additional Attorney's Fees over \$10,000. An attorney who proposes to charge a debtor more than \$10,000 in the aggregate for legal services in a chapter 13 case shall file an application for compensation in accordance with Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2016 and MLBR 2016-1.

#### **RULE 13-8. OBJECTIONS TO CONFIRMATION**

- (a) Deadline for Filing

Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, any objection to confirmation of a chapter 13 plan shall be filed on or before the later of (i) thirty (30) days after the date on which the first § 341 meeting is held or (ii) thirty (30) days after service of an amended or modified plan.

(b) Service of Objection

An objection to confirmation shall be filed with the Court and served on the chapter 13 trustee, the debtor, the debtor's attorney, and any other party or attorney who has filed an appearance and requested service of pleadings. The objection shall be accompanied by a certificate of service evidencing compliance with this requirement.

(c) Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, any response to the objection must be filed within fourteen (14) days after service of the objection. If no response is filed, the Court may sustain the objection without further hearing.

(d) Following the filing of any response to an objection to confirmation, counsel to the debtor or a pro se debtor shall confer with counsel to the objecting party, either in person or by telephone conference, to make a good faith effort to resolve or narrow disputes as to the contents of an objection to confirmation. The objecting party shall be responsible for initiating the conference by telephone, fax, email, first class mail, or in person. Counsel to an objecting party does not violate the automatic stay by contacting the pro se debtor in complying with the requirements of this Rule. Such communication shall be for the purpose of initiating the conference only, and the conference must be held either in person or by telephone.

(e) No later than twenty-one (21) days after the response to an objection to confirmation is filed, the objecting party shall file a certificate stating either (i) that the conference was held, the date of the conference, and the names of the participating parties; or (ii) that the conference was not held despite timely and reasonable efforts made to initiate the conference, which efforts must be set forth with specificity in the certificate. The Court will not schedule a hearing on an objection to confirmation until the objecting party files the certificate. In the event the parties do not hold the required conference, the Court may order appropriate sanctions, including sustaining or overruling the objection to confirmation or awarding monetary sanctions. The requirement of a conference shall not apply in the event the Court determines that expedited or emergency consideration of the objection to confirmation is warranted.

**RULE 13-9.            SECTION 341 MEETING OF CREDITORS**

- (a) The Clerk shall serve on all creditors notice of the § 341(a) meeting of creditors and initial confirmation hearing date along with a proof of claim form in accordance with Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2002(a) and 2003(a).
- (b) If the debtor fails to appear at the § 341 meeting, the case may be dismissed upon motion of a party in interest pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 109(g).
- (c) The debtor shall file tax returns in accordance with the provisions of 11 U.S.C. § 1308. When the tax return is filed, the debtor shall file with the Clerk and serve on the chapter 13 trustee a notice of the filing of the return, which shall disclose the amount of the tax liability or the amount of the refund.

**RULE 13-10.            AMENDMENTS TO PLAN PRIOR TO CONFIRMATION**

- (a) Amendments to a plan which do not adversely affect creditors may be made at or prior to the § 341(a) meeting without leave of the Court by a separate pleading entitled "Modification of Plan," which shall be filed with the Court and served on the chapter 13 trustee and any party or attorney who has filed an appearance and requested service of pleadings in the case. The modification shall be accompanied by a certificate of service. If no objections to the modification are filed within fourteen (14) days after service, the Court shall consider confirmation of the plan as amended.
- (b) Where an amendment to a plan adversely affects creditors, the debtor shall file with the Court an amended plan and a motion to approve the amended plan. The debtor shall serve a copy of the amended plan and motion to approve the amended plan on the chapter 13 trustee, all creditors, and all parties and attorneys who filed appearances and requested service of all pleadings in the case. The motion shall be accompanied by a certificate of service. If no objections to the motion to approve the amended plan or the amended plan are filed within thirty (30) days of the filing of the certificate of service, the Court may allow the motion without a hearing.

**RULE 13-11.            CONFIRMATION**

- (a) Where no objection to confirmation of a chapter 13 plan is filed within the time limits established by paragraph 13-8(a) of this order, the Court may enter an order confirming the plan without a hearing.

- (b) Where a timely objection to a chapter 13 plan is filed, the Court shall hold a hearing on the objection. The Clerk shall schedule a confirmation hearing and advise the objecting party and/or its counsel of the hearing date. The objecting party shall provide notice of the confirmation hearing to the debtor, debtor's counsel, all creditors, interested parties, and all parties who filed appearances and requested service of all pleadings, and shall file a certificate of service regarding the notice of the hearing.
- (c) The chapter 13 trustee shall submit a proposed order of confirmation to the Court in conformity with MLBR Official Local Form 4 within twenty-one (21) days after the later of 1) the Court's order overruling any objection to confirmation; 2) the withdrawal of an objection to confirmation; or 3) in the event that there are no objections to confirmation, the deadline for filing objections to confirmation. The chapter 13 trustee shall attach a copy of the plan to the proposed order of confirmation. The chapter 13 trustee shall serve a copy of the proposed order of confirmation on the debtor's attorney, the debtor, and all parties and attorneys who have filed appearances and requested service of pleadings in the case.

#### **RULE 13-12. AMENDMENTS TO PLAN AFTER CONFIRMATION**

- (a) A debtor who seeks to amend a chapter 13 plan after confirmation shall do so by filing a motion to amend the plan with a copy of the proposed amended plan (filed as a separate document). The motion to amend shall include a summary and statement of the reason for the amendment. In conjunction with the motion to amend, the debtor shall file updated schedules I and J if plan payments are changing under the terms of the amended plan. The chapter 13 trustee, in his or her discretion, may schedule a new § 341 meeting with respect to the amended plan.
- (b) The debtor shall serve a copy of the motion, amended plan, updated schedules I and J, and the amended statement on the chapter 13 trustee, all creditors, and parties and attorneys who have filed appearances and requested service of pleadings in the case. In the event that the debtor proposes more than one amended plan, each amended plan shall be titled "First Amended Plan," "Second Amended Plan," and so on as may be appropriate.
- (c) The Court shall not consider any amendments to a plan unless they are set forth in an amended plan that conforms to MLBR Official Local Form 3A.
- (d) Approval of an amended plan after confirmation of a prior plan may be granted without a hearing if no objections are timely filed. Objections to an amended plan shall be filed no later than thirty (30) days from the date of service of the motion to amend. In the event that no objections to the motion are timely filed, the Court may, in its discretion, allow the

motion to amend without a hearing. If a party in interest files a timely objection to the motion, the Court shall set the motion and objection for hearing. The objecting party shall serve a notice of hearing on the debtor, debtor's counsel, all creditors, the chapter 13 trustee, and all parties who filed appearances and requested service of pleadings at least seven (7) days before the hearing date, and shall file a certificate of service.

- (e) The trustee shall submit a proposed order confirming an amended plan in conformity with MLBR Official Local Form 4 within twenty-one (21) days after the Court allows the motion to amend the plan. The chapter 13 trustee shall attach a copy of the amended plan to the proposed order of confirmation. The chapter 13 trustee shall serve a copy of the proposed order confirming an amended plan on the debtor, debtor's attorney, and all parties and attorneys who have filed appearances and requested service of pleadings in the case.

### **RULE 13-13. PROOFS OF CLAIM AND OBJECTIONS**

- (a) All creditors must timely file a proof of claim that conforms with Official Form B10 to participate in distributions under the plan. If the claim relates to a mortgage or security agreement, the creditor shall attach a copy of the original note and mortgage or security agreement to the proof of claim. If the claimant is not the original holder of the note and mortgage or security agreement, in addition to attaching copies of the original note, mortgage or security agreement to the proof of claim, the creditor shall attach copies of any and all assignments or other appropriate documentation sufficient to trace the chain of ownership of the mortgage or security agreement and to establish its standing to assert the claim.
- (b) A creditor whose proof of claim relates to a mortgage or security agreement shall set forth a detailed itemization of all amounts asserted to be due. The itemization shall set forth the principal, interest, costs, and all expenses charged under the agreement or statute under which the claim arose, including but not limited to expenses of any notices, foreclosure sales, advertisements and/or appraisals. The itemization shall also include a statement of attorneys' fees charged as an accounting of the amount of the prepetition arrearage. The Court, in its discretion, may order a claimant or a claimant's attorney to file an application for compensation and reimbursement of expenses in accordance with MLBR 2016-1 or an accounting of the amount of any prepetition arrearage.
- (c) Only the provisions of MLBR 3007-1(a), (c), (d) and (f) apply to chapter 13 cases. A party objecting to claims shall attach a notice to the objection filed with the Court, which shall advise claimant(s) that a response to the objection must be filed within 30 days of the filing of the objection with the Court. The objecting party shall serve the objection and the notice on the claimant at the address noted on the proof of claim or any subsequent



address provided to the Court by the claimant and upon any other party entitled to notice together with a certificate of service.

- (d) Within seven (7) days after filing a response to an objection to a proof of claim, the objecting party (whether the trustee, counsel to the debtor, or a pro se debtor) shall confer with counsel to the claimant, either in person or by telephone conference to make a good faith effort to resolve or narrow disputes as to the contents of the objection to claim. Counsel to the objecting party, the chapter 13 trustee or the pro se debtor shall be responsible for initiating the conference by telephone, facsimile, email, first class mail, or in person. Such communications shall be for the purposes of initiating the conference only, and the conference must be held either in person or by telephone. The Court shall not schedule a hearing on an objection to claim unless counsel to the objecting party or a pro se debtor files a certificate stating that the conference was held, together with the date and time of the conference, and the names of the participating parties. If the conference is not held despite timely efforts to initiate the conference, the party initiating the conference must file a statement attesting to the efforts made to initiate the conference. In the event the parties do not hold the required conference, the Court may order appropriate sanctions, including sustaining or overruling the objection to claim or awarding monetary sanctions. The requirement of a conference shall not apply in the event the Court determines that expedited or emergency consideration of the objection to claim is warranted.
- (e) Objections to claims shall be served and filed with the Court within thirty (30) days after the deadline for filing proofs of claim or within such additional time as the Court may allow upon the filing of a motion to extend time and for good cause shown. Any claim to which a timely objection is not filed shall be deemed allowed and paid by the chapter 13 trustee in accordance with the provisions of the confirmed plan. The Court, in its discretion, may overrule an untimely objection to a proof of claim.
- (f) If the Court has determined the allowed amount of a secured or unsecured claim in the context of a valuation hearing pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 506, the debtor or trustee need not file an objection to a secured creditor's proof of claim that varies from the Court's determination, and the chapter 13 trustee shall make distribution in accordance with the Court's order.

#### **RULE 13-14. SALE OF ESTATE PROPERTY**

- (a) Any sale of the property of the estate outside the ordinary course of business, including but not limited to, the debtor's principal residence, real property, or other property must be approved by the Court after notice and a hearing. A motion for such approval shall be

made in accordance with 11 U.S.C. § 363, Fed. R. Bankr. P. 4001 or 6004, and MLBR 6004-1, as applicable, and the notice of sale shall conform to MLBR Official Local Form 2A. The motion to sell shall include a proposed distribution of the proceeds of the sale. All motions to sell shall be served on the chapter 13 trustee, all creditors, all parties who have filed appearances and any other entity as the Court may direct.

- (b) If an appraiser or real estate broker is involved in the sale, the debtor must obtain Court authority to employ the appraiser or broker by way of motion. The motion must be accompanied by an affidavit of disinterestedness signed by the broker and comply with the requirements of MLBR 2014(a)-1 and 6005-1.
- (c) Within forty-five (45) days after the entry of an order approving a private sale of real estate which is property of the estate, the chapter 13 debtor's attorney or the debtor (if the debtor is unrepresented), shall file with the Court a "Status Report Regarding Sale of Estate Property" (the "Report"). The Report shall contain the following information: 1) the date of the closing of the sale, or if no closing has been held as of the date of the Report, the reasons for delay in the closing of the sale; 2) a detailed itemization of the disbursements made at the closing, or in the alternative, the Report shall attach as an exhibit a copy of the executed settlement statement for the closing of the sale. The closing attorney and the debtor's attorney (or the debtor, if the debtor is unrepresented) shall ensure compliance with the terms of the order of the Court approving the sale.

#### **RULE 13-15. BORROWINGS OR REFINANCING OF ESTATE PROPERTY**

The provisions and requirements of MLBR 4001-2 shall apply in chapter 13 cases. Any motion for approval of a borrowing or refinancing shall include all the material terms of the proposed credit arrangement. A copy of any borrowing agreement shall be attached to the motion.

#### **RULE 13-16-1. MOTIONS FOR RELIEF FROM STAY**

##### **(a) Pre-filing Conference**

- (1) At least seven (7) days prior to filing a motion for relief from stay, counsel to the movant shall confer with counsel to the debtor or with the pro se debtor, in person or by telephone, to make a reasonable, good faith effort to resolve or narrow disputes as to the contents of the motion. Movant's counsel shall be responsible for initiating the conference either by telephone, facsimile, e-mail, or first class mail or in person. Such communications shall be for the purposes of initiating the

conference only, and the conference must be held either in person or by telephone. A movant does not violate the automatic stay by contacting the pro se debtor(s) in complying with this Rule.

- (2) If the conference is not held despite timely and reasonable good faith efforts made by movant to initiate the conference, movant's counsel shall attest to the efforts made to initiate the conference with counsel to the debtor or with the pro se debtor.
- (3) All motions for relief from stay shall be accompanied by a certificate stating that
  - (A) the conference was held, together with the date and time of the conference and the names of the participating parties; or
  - (B) the conference was not held despite the reasonable efforts made by the movant's counsel as set forth in counsel's attestation.
- (4) Motions unaccompanied by a certificate may be denied without prejudice to their renewal when accompanied by the certificate.
- (5) A pre-filing conference is not required if (a) the movant has obtained the debtor's assent to the motion prior to the motion being filed with the Court and the motion so indicates, or (b) the debtor has indicated an intent to surrender the real property that is the subject of the motion in the debtor's chapter 13 plan filed with the Court.

(b) Emergency or Expedited Motions

Subsection (a) shall not apply if the movant seeks determination of a motion for relief on an expedited or emergency basis, provided that the motion shall contain a statement consistent with the provisions of MLBR 9013-1.

(c) Contents of Motion

In addition to the requirements of MLBR 4001-1, and except for motions governed by Local Rule 13-16-1(d), a motion for relief from the automatic stay shall provide the following information:

- (1) the date of the filing of the chapter 13 petition;
- (2) the total amount owed to the moving party;
- (3) the date of confirmation of the plan;
- (4) the amount of the monthly payment at issue;
- (5) the total amount of the post-petition or post-confirmation payments (principal and interest) in default as of the date of the filing of the motion and the amount due as

of the anticipated date of hearing, and the total amount of any other post-petition change due or anticipated as of each of these dates;

- (6) the total amount of the prepetition arrearage;
- (7) the identity and an estimation of the amounts due all lienholders, in order of their priority;
- (8) an opinion of the value of the property (by declaration), if such value is an issue to be determined; and
- (9) if the motion for relief from stay is based on defaults in payments to or through the chapter 13 trustee, the motion must show that the debtor has not made the payments to the chapter 13 trustee.

The Court, in its discretion, may deny a motion for relief from stay in the absence of an objection, if the above information is not set forth in the motion.

(d) Motion for Relief from Stay - Real Estate Worksheet (the “Worksheet”)

In addition to the requirements of MLBR 4001-1(a) and (b) and 13-16-1(a) and (b), a motion for relief from stay with respect to real property shall be accompanied by MLBR Official Local Form 13, entitled Motion for Relief from Stay - Real Estate Worksheet (the “Worksheet”). The Court in its discretion may deny a motion for relief from stay pertaining to real estate notwithstanding the absence of an opposition, if the Worksheet and the documents required to be attached to it do not accompany the motion for relief from stay. A motion for relief from the automatic stay need not be accompanied by a Worksheet if (a) the movant has obtained the debtor’s assent to the motion prior to the motion being filed with the Court and the motion so indicates, or (b) the debtor has indicated an intent to surrender the real property that is the subject of the motion in the debtor’s chapter 13 plan filed with the Court.

(e) Debtor’s Schedule of Payments in Dispute

In addition to the requirements of MLBR 4001-1(c), if a debtor opposes a motion for relief from stay in which the movant seeks to foreclose a mortgage for post-petition defaults, the debtor shall file MLBR Official Local Form 14, entitled Debtor(s)’ Schedule of Payments in Dispute (the “Schedule”). The Court in its discretion may overrule an opposition to a motion for relief from stay in the absence of a timely filed Schedule.

(f) Consolidation of Motion for Relief from Stay with Objection to Claim

If the motion for relief from stay and opposition raise issues in addition to, or other than, the debtor’s postpetition payment history, the parties may request, or the Court may order, at either the preliminary, nonevidentiary hearing or at the final evidentiary hearing,

that the motion for relief from stay be consolidated with any objection filed by the debtor or the trustee to the movant's proof of claim.

(g) Request for Final Evidentiary Hearing

If the parties determine that the motion for relief from stay cannot be resolved and an evidentiary hearing is required, the parties may file a joint request for a final evidentiary hearing in lieu of a preliminary nonevidentiary hearing. The Court in its discretion may cancel the preliminary nonevidentiary hearing and extend the automatic stay until the final evidentiary hearing. The final evidentiary hearing shall be scheduled no later than sixty (60) days after the filing of the motion, unless the parties in interest consent to an extension of the periods set forth in 11 U.S.C. § 362(e). In the joint request for a final evidentiary hearing, the movant shall indicate whether or not it waives the time periods for determination of the motion for relief from stay pursuant to § 362(e).

**RULE 13-16-2. STIPULATIONS RELATING TO MOTIONS FOR RELIEF FROM STAY**

(a) Service of Stipulation

A stipulation resolving a motion for relief from stay shall be served, together with a motion to approve the stipulation, on the chapter 13 trustee, any other entity with an interest in the property, including any lienholder or co-owner, and an attorney who has filed an appearance requesting service in the case. The party filing the motion to approve the stipulation shall file a certificate of service reflecting compliance with this Rule.

(b) Objections to Stipulations

Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, an objection to a stipulation resolving a motion for relief from stay shall be filed within fourteen (14) days from the date of service of the stipulation. Notwithstanding this requirement, the Court, in its discretion, may cancel a hearing scheduled on a motion for relief from stay which is the subject of a stipulation and may approve a stipulation resolving a motion for relief from stay without a hearing.

(c) Defaults under Stipulations

Any provision of a stipulation or agreement filed with the Court through which the debtor stipulates or agrees to dismissal of the chapter 13 case or the entry of an order granting relief from the automatic stay under 11 U.S.C. § 362(a) upon the failure of the debtor to make payments beyond those necessary to cure a prior postpetition default, shall be deemed void and unenforceable, unless such language in the proposed stipulation or agreement is conspicuously set forth in capital letters and bold type.

- (d) If after a prefiling conference, the parties enter into a stipulation without the need for the filing of a motion for relief from stay and the debtor subsequently defaults under the terms of the stipulation, the party filing the motion to approve stipulation must file a motion for relief from the stay, together with an affidavit of noncompliance with the stipulation and a certificate of service attesting to service on the parties as set forth in subsection (a) of this Rule, to obtain an order from the Court granting relief from the automatic stay.

#### **RULE 13-17. MOTIONS TO DISMISS AND CONVERT**

- (a) A party who files a motion to dismiss or convert a chapter 13 case shall serve the motion on the debtor, debtor's attorney, all creditors, any applicable child support enforcement agency, any party who filed an appearance in the case, and the chapter 13 trustee, and shall file a certificate of service. The motion shall state with particularity the cause for dismissal. A party who opposes a motion to dismiss shall file a response to the motion to dismiss within twenty-one (21) days of service of the motion. If no response to the motion to dismiss is filed, the Court, in its discretion, may allow the motion without a hearing.
- (b) In a case not previously converted under 11 U.S.C. § 706, § 1208, or § 1112, a debtor electing to have the case dismissed may file a motion to voluntarily dismiss the case, pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 1307, which motion shall be served on the chapter 13 trustee. The debtor's motion to dismiss shall contain a statement as to whether the case has been converted previously. If the Court enters an order dismissing the case, the Clerk shall provide timely notice of the dismissal to all creditors on the matrix and to the chapter 13 trustee.
- (c) If the Court denies confirmation of the debtor's plan, the case shall be dismissed by the Court without further notice unless, within fourteen (14) days after denial of confirmation, or a different time fixed by the Court:
  - (1) the debtor files an amended plan;
  - (2) the debtor moves to convert the case to one under another chapter of the Bankruptcy Code;
  - (3) the debtor files a Motion for Reconsideration or appeals the denial of confirmation, and obtains a stay of the dismissal order; or
  - (4) the Court otherwise orders.

**RULE 13-18.            CONVERSION FROM CHAPTERS 11 OR 7 TO CHAPTER 13**

Within fourteen (14) days after conversion of a case from chapter 11 or chapter 7 to chapter 13, the debtor shall file with the Court those documents required by paragraph 13-2 of these Chapter 13 Rules and serve copies on the chapter 13 trustee.

**RULE 13-19.            COMMENCEMENT AND CONTINUATION OF PAYMENTS TO THE  
CHAPTER 13 TRUSTEE; LESSORS AND SECURED PARTIES;  
DISMISSAL FOR FAILURE TO MAKE REQUIRED PAYMENTS**

- (a) Payments to the chapter 13 trustee pursuant to either 11 U.S.C. § 1326(a) or the terms of a confirmed plan shall be made by certified check, money order or through an electronic payment system authorized by the trustee. Each payment shall be legibly marked with the bankruptcy case number and the name of the debtor as it appears in the caption of the case.
- (b) Payments to the chapter 13 trustee pursuant to either 11 U.S.C. § 1326(a) or the terms of a confirmed plan shall continue until the case has been dismissed, the debtor has completed all payments required by the plan, the debtor has moved for either a hardship discharge pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 1328(b) or voluntary dismissal, or the debtor has requested that the case be converted to a case under another chapter of the Bankruptcy Code.
- (c) Payments of personal property leases governed by 11 U.S.C. § 1326(a)(1)(B) shall only be made directly by the debtor to the lessor if the debtor's plan so provides or if no plan provision addresses payment of the debtor's lease obligation. If the plan provides for payment of the lease obligation by the trustee, the debtor shall make the payment as part of the total payment to the trustee, and the trustee shall pay the lessor, both before and after confirmation.
- (d) Pre-confirmation adequate protection payments governed by 11 U.S.C. § 1326(a)(1)(C) shall only be made directly by the debtor to the secured creditor if the debtor's plan so provides or if no plan provision addresses payment of the debtor's secured obligation. If the plan provides for payment of the secured claim by the trustee, the debtor shall make the payment as part of the total payment to the trustee, and the trustee shall pay the secured creditor, both before and after confirmation.
- (e) The Court will not consider, allow or approve motions or stipulations for direct payment to the chapter 13 trustee from the debtor's employer or any other entity.
- (f) The administrative expenses that the chapter 13 trustee shall deduct from any remittance to be made to the debtor under 11 U.S.C. § 1326(a)(2) shall include: (a) chapter 13 trustee

compensation calculated in accordance with 28 U.S.C. §586(e); and (b) any outstanding filing fees owed to the Court.

#### **RULE 13-20. DISTRIBUTION**

Unless otherwise directed by the Court, the distribution of any proceeds pursuant to a confirmed plan shall be mailed to the address of the creditor as designated pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2002(g).

#### **RULE 13-21. CHAPTER 13 TRUSTEE'S FINAL ACCOUNT**

When the chapter 13 trustee determines that the plan has been completed or the Court otherwise orders, the trustee shall file and serve a final report and account on all creditors with allowed claims, all attorneys who have filed appearances and requested service of pleadings in the case, the debtor, and debtor's attorney. The report shall state the allowed amount of each claim and the amount paid on each claim. The chapter 13 trustee shall file a certificate of service reflecting service of the final report and account and provide an objection deadline. In the absence of a timely filed objection, the Court may approve the final report and account without a hearing.

#### **RULE 13-22. DISCHARGE**

- (a) Upon completion of a chapter 13 plan, a debtor shall file a Motion for Entry of Discharge with Affidavit in Support of Motion for Entry of Discharge which conforms with MLBR Official Local Form 12.
- (b) The debtor shall serve the Motion for Entry of Discharge and Affidavit upon the beneficiary of the debtor's domestic support obligations, if any, the chapter 13 trustee, the United States trustee, and all of the debtor's creditors. Any objections to the motion must be filed within fourteen (14) days after service. The Court may, in its discretion, schedule a hearing if an objection is filed. If the debtor fails to file the motion within a reasonable time after completion of plan payments due under the confirmed plan, the case may be closed without the entry of a discharge order.
- (c) Unless otherwise determined by the Court, the order of discharge shall include findings that:
  - (1) all allowed claims have been fully paid in accordance with the provisions of the confirmed plan; or



- (2) with respect to secured claims which continue beyond the term of the plan, any pre-petition or post-petition defaults have been cured and such claims are in all respects current, with no escrow balance, late charges, costs or attorneys' fees owing.
- (d) The order of discharge shall direct that:
  - (1) creditors who held secured claims which were fully paid execute and deliver to the debtor a release or other discharge certificate suitable for recording; and
  - (2) creditors who hold secured claims which continue beyond the term of the plan take no action inconsistent with the findings provided for in subsection (c)(2).

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